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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended): A touch panel input device, comprising:
a contact sensitive panel; and
a grounding conductor conductively coupled to the contact sensitive panel and configured to be conductively coupled to an external ground,

wherein the grounding conductor comprises a first section attached to the contact sensitive panel, and a second section extending from the first section to the external ground.

2. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 1, wherein the contact sensitive panel comprises a first substrate exposed to contact by a user, and wherein the grounding conductor is conductively coupled to the first substrate.

3. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 2, wherein the first substrate comprises a surface exposed to contact by the user, and a first conductive surface, wherein the grounding conductor is conductively insulated from the first conductive surface.

4. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 2, wherein the contact sensitive panel further comprises a second substrate electrically insulated from the first substrate, and wherein the grounding conductor is conductively coupled to the second substrate.

5. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 4, wherein the second substrate comprises a second conductive surface, and wherein the grounding conductor is conductively insulated from the second conductive surface.

6. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 3, wherein the contact sensitive panel further comprises a second substrate conductively insulated from the first substrate, wherein the second substrate comprises a second conductive surface facing the first conductive surface, and wherein the grounding conductor is conductively coupled to the second substrate and conductively insulated from the second conductive surface.

7. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 6, wherein the grounding conductor comprises a first conductive layer on the first substrate on the same side as the first conductive surface, a second conductive layer on the second substrate on the same side as the second conductive surface, wherein the first and second conductive layers are conductively coupled.

8. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 7, wherein the first and second conductive layers are formed on the first and second substrates along with the first and second conductive surfaces on the first and second substrates.

9. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 7, wherein the grounding conductor comprises a generally loop shaped structure.

10. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 9, wherein the loop extends along the periphery of the contact sensitive panel.

11. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 1, wherein the grounding conductor comprises a generally loop shaped structure.

12. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 11, wherein the generally loop shaped structure is a complete closed loop:

13. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 11, wherein the loop extends along the periphery of the contact sensitive panel.

14. (Original): The touch panel as claimed in claim 1, wherein the contact sensitive panel comprises sensing lines that facilitate sensing relative changes in electrical properties arising from user contact within an active area of the contact sensitive panel covered by the sensing lines, wherein the grounding conductor is conductively coupled to the touch panel outside the active area covered by the sensing lines.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Original): A display system, comprising a touch panel as claimed in claim 1, and a display element operatively coupled to the touch panel, wherein locations on an active area of the contact sensitive panel correspond to locations on a display area of the display element.

17. (Original): The display system as in claim 16, wherein the display element is at least one of liquid crystal display element, plasma display element and cathode ray tube element.

18. (Original): An electronic device, comprising:
a display system as in claim 16; and

a device controller coupled to the display system and configured to process data corresponding to an image to be rendered by the display system.

19. (Original): The electronic device as claimed in claim 18, comprising at least one of a portable device, a display monitor and a user input device.

20. (New): A touch panel input device, comprising:

a contact sensitive panel comprising a first substrate having a first conductive surface;

and

a grounding conductor conductively coupled to the contact sensitive panel and configured to be conductively coupled to an external ground, wherein the grounding conductor comprises a first conductive layer on the first substrate on the same side as and insulated from the first conductive surface.

21. (New): A touch panel input device as in claim 20, further comprising a second substrate having a second conductive surface facing the first conductive surface, wherein the grounding conductor comprises a second conductive layer on the second substrate on the same side as and insulated from the second conductive surface.